

In the specification:

Insert the paper copy of the Sequence Listing filed herewith following the Drawings.

Replace the paragraph beginning at page 16, line 23 with the following rewritten paragraph:

Total RNA of cells was extracted using RNeasy Mini Kit (QIAGEN). The concentration of total RNA was measured by absorption at 260 nm. Total RNA (1 μ g) was then mixed with 50 picomoles of HCV specific reverse primer: A9412, 5'-GATGGC CTATTG GCCTGG AGGGG-3' (SEQ ID NO:7) (Lohmann *et al.* (2001) *J Virol.* 75: 1437-49). RNA was added with RNase-free ddH₂O to a final volume of 10.5 μ L and denatured for 10 min at 65°C. Reverse transcription (RT) reactions were carried out at 42°C for 1 hr using Expand-RT (Roche Biochemicals, Mannheim, Germany) in a total volume of 20 μ L containing a previously denatured primer-RNA mixture, 1 mM each of deoxynucleotide triphosphates (dNTPs), 50 units reverse transcriptase, and 20 units RNase inhibitor (Promega, Madison, WI).